

Trump has rescinded that, but he said he would sign the Dream Act if it came to his desk. So we are asking our Republican colleagues to join us in this bipartisan legislation.

Just to put it in historical perspective, the President said: I can't act. Congress must act.

But even when Congress acted, President Reagan said: You didn't go far enough.

So he instituted a Family Fairness initiative, which protected many more people than Congress did. President George Herbert Walker Bush continued that leadership and that courage, as did President Clinton; President George W. Bush, one of the best Presidents we have ever had in terms of his advocacy for newcomers to our country, realizing that they make America more American by invigorating our country with hope, aspirations, and dreams; and President Obama, of course, a great President in this regard as well.

So this is the first President we have had who has put doubt as to whether we respect the contribution of newcomers to our country.

He has said he would sign this bill. We trust his word. We just need our Republican colleagues to join in the discharge petition, and to appeal to the Speaker, with or without a discharge petition, take the initiative, take the lead, make America more American by unleashing the power and the patriotism of our DREAMers.

WE MUST CONTINUE TO ROOT OUT RACISM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. EVANS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. EVANS. Madam Speaker, it is with great honor that I rise today to anchor tonight's CBC Special Order hour.

I first want to thank the coanchors, Representative VEASEY and Delegate STACEY PLASKETT, for their work on coanchoring the Special Order hour for the caucus.

Our thoughts and our prayers are with those in the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, the Caribbean, as well as those in Louisiana, Texas, and Florida, and others who have been impacted by the devastating hurricanes. We also pray for our brothers and sisters in Mexico, who are recovering and rehabilitating after the devastating earthquake that rocked their country. We encourage all to do what they can do to help our brothers and our sisters.

Tonight, we are here to talk about how we must continue to root out racism. We are here to talk about how we should bring our neighborhoods, our Nation, together and not drive Americans apart.

What took place in Charlottesville, and the dialogue with the NFL players,

the NBA players, President Trump continues to highlight how our President does not seem to understand what is at stake and how his actions are undermining the strength and the stability of our neighborhoods.

You have heard me say, as I have said it again and again two summers ago when speaking to members of an African-American community at a rally in Philadelphia, President Trump says: "What do you have to lose?"

He actually said: "What the hell do you have to lose?"

That is right. What do you have to lose? Everything, Mr. President. We have everything to lose: good schools for our children, safe neighborhoods, reliable healthcare, quality jobs, peace of mind, and that the next generation will be better off.

President Trump has been in office for almost 250 days, and all we have to show for it is division, division, division. He has divided our country in ways we didn't even think we wanted to acknowledge are still happening in 2017.

For the next 60 minutes, we have a chance to speak directly to the American people on issues of great importance to the Congressional Black Caucus, the Congress, and the constituents we represent.

Madam Speaker, I would like to yield to the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, the Honorable CEDRIC RICHMOND from the Second Congressional District of Louisiana.

Mr. RICHMOND. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Congressman EVANS, for leading this Special Order and for yielding to me, especially on a matter this important.

As I reflect on the last 200 or so days in this country, I am saddened.

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The truth of the matter is I always thought this country was better than this. I thought that we had so many people, not just African Americans, but we had people of like mind, like Goodman, Chaney, and Schwerner, who gave their lives and who sacrificed blood, sweat, and tears so that this country could be a more perfect Union, so that I could go to some of the best schools in the country, so that I could dream the impossible dream, so that I could stand on the floor of this House and speak my mind, introduce legislation, but, more importantly, fight for the ideals that make this country an exceptional country.

It is so easy for our President and our colleagues to say America's exceptional. Well, it is, but you have to understand how it got to be exceptional, because it didn't start off that way. In fact, we came here on boats. We survived middle passage. We built this Capitol as free labor. We have given as much blood, sweat, and tears as any people in this country.

To see the President of the United States call people who would walk with

neo-Nazis and the KKK and white supremacists, some of them are fine people—but young African-American males are taking a knee not to disrespect our country, but they are taking a knee because they want a better future for their sons. They want better community police interaction. What they want is that people who are with the color of law with misconduct against African-American men and women, sons and daughters, parents, grandparents, what they want is a better country for them.

They didn't choose violence. They chose peaceful protests just like Martin Luther King. When Dr. King chose peaceful protests, what the President doesn't realize is that the country wasn't accepting of his ways either.

"Letter from Birmingham Jail" was all about Dr. King responding to people of like mind who shared the cause of freedom and equality and justice. They just didn't like his tactics. And the question was: We should wait. His letter was addressing people of like mind.

The problem here is I just can't address someone of like mind because I don't think that this administration has the maturity, the sensitivity, or the understanding, whether it is willful or unwilling, to understand what is going on in this country. Instead of doing the Presidential thing, instead of doing the right thing and bringing this country together, I am afraid that this country is being torn apart at its very core, and for that I know that we are a better country.

Let me just say in closing that, in order for us to move forward in a more responsible and more perfect fashion, it is going to take ordinary citizens like you out there watching us at home, it is going to take you all standing up and speaking out. It doesn't matter if you are African American or if you are Hispanic or if you are Black, injustice is injustice. The words "no justice, no peace" are not a threat. It is that it is hard to accomplish peace when there is no justice in the land.

I would just ask that we all come together and that we not only look at words, but we look at policies, so when we now look at the opioid addiction through a loving mental health medical crisis standpoint, we don't forget the young people who were addicted to crack and who got involved in drugs back then that we have now decided that, with opioids, we are going to take a nurturing approach and with crack we locked everyone up. We should come in, take the approach that we are doing with opioids, which is the exact correct approach, and we should apply it to crack, and we should apply it to all of those millions of people who are incarcerated for drug crimes.

When you start talking about root out racism, it has to be in policy, it has to be in our rhetoric, but it has to be in our daily lives.

Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Congressman EVANS, for yielding to me.

Mr. EVANS. Madam Speaker, I would like to associate myself with the remarks of the distinguished chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, who, under his leadership, has clearly demonstrated that he understands and gets it.

Look at the President's actions just this past week. He is involved in an incredible, misguided, thoughtless, careless Twitter fight with the NFL, the NBA, and other athletes, while people in Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands need emergency housing, electricity, clean water, and other Federal aid.

When Americans think of big things, they think of the Office of the President of the United States. Let me repeat that. When Americans think of big things, they think of the Office of the President of the United States.

In these times, Americans—and the rest of the world, for that matter—think of the U.S. President as a person who takes time to think over the great ideas of the day, works to fix the biggest problems and find ways to make the world come together, no matter the party, no matter the person.

Madam Speaker, I want to yield to a gentleman whom I have known for a long period of time, and I knew his father, who was a real leader, and he has definitely come along and carried that. As a matter of fact, we are neighbors. He is from the great Garden State, the honorable DONALD PAYNE, Jr., of the Tenth Congressional District.

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, I first want to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Congressman EVANS, for hosting tonight's Special Order Hour on rooting out racism in the United States. He has a long history of legislative accomplishments back in the Keystone State and has brought his understanding and talents here to the House of Representatives, and we appreciate him being a Member of this body.

Before I begin, I also want to let the Americans in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands know that we stand with them as they rebuild.

Madam Speaker, the First Amendment of the United States Constitution guarantees to all people in this country the freedom to speak out against injustice. When Colin Kaepernick took a knee during the National Anthem last year, he joined a long list of patriotic athletes who used their fame to do just that.

Muhammad Ali was convicted of draft dodging because he refused to drop bombs and bullets on Brown people in Vietnam while the so-called Negro people in Louisville, Kentucky, were treated like dogs.

Jackie Robinson, the great Baseball Hall of Famer who integrated baseball, admitted in 1972 that he no longer could stand and sing the National Anthem.

The First Amendment to the United States Constitution endows all of us with the freedom of speech, the freedom to speak out our own truths. Mu-

hammad Ali would not fight an unjust war; Jackie Robinson would not salute a flag that he believed symbolized his oppression; and Colin Kaepernick took a knee to bring America's attention to the fact that Black Americans are twice as likely as White Americans to be killed by police officers, to bring attention to the fact that 1 in every 10 Black men in his thirties is in prison or in jail on any given day, to bring attention to the statistic that tells us Black people are twice as likely as White people to be in poverty in the wealthiest country on Earth.

It is easy to keep quiet, to do nothing in the face of injustice. But just like the muscles in our bodies, our Constitution will wither if we do not exercise our rights. To speak out against injustice is to exercise the constitutional right of free speech. What is more patriotic than exercising the rights our Nation stands for?

When the President uses his right of free speech in an attempt to silence athletes, he is undermining the freedom for which patriotic Americans have fought during our 241-year history. When the President calls for men and women to be fired from their jobs because they dare use their public platform to combat injustice, he fuels the viciousness he claims that he wants to despise. As Langston Hughes put it: "Let America be America again—The land that has never been yet—And yet must be—the land where every man is free."

Madam Speaker, I talk about the Constitution because it talks about all people. There are times where I have been disappointed and let down by this Nation not holding up its creed because, you see, I believe in America, but I am waiting for that day when all men are created equal. I am still waiting for that day.

We are here tonight to bring attention to this matter. We are exercising our right to free speech, the right that has been given every American in this country, supposedly. But if the President of the United States can stand up somewhere in this country and call a section of this country, a certain people in this country, SOBs, then what does that say about where we are? This is the leader of the United States of America, the land of the free, the home of the brave. But is it that for everyone?

We have a ways to go in this country. Yes, we have come a long way, and some people will say: Well, you know, why are you still talking about those old issues? And, you know, things are different now and better for you. And, look, come on, get over it.

And then we see what we have seen over the last several years with African Americans constantly getting shot and there being no ramifications. It tears at your heart, Madam Speaker, to understand why, why, in the greatest nation on the face of the Earth, we still have these situations of such inequity.

So we will continue to raise the issue until one day this country can live up

to its creed that all men and women are created equal and endowed with certain inalienable rights.

With that, Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for yielding to me.

Mr. EVANS. Madam Speaker, the gentleman from New Jersey is spot on, as usual. He has a very quiet demeanor, but he is someone who, when he speaks, is very clear and concise with his thoughts and his comments. In the short period of time that I have been here, I have watched him in action; and I think when you just heard his comments, you heard that he really understands, as he said, that we all do believe in America, but we know there is an awful lot of work to do, and he has certainly expressed that.

Madam Speaker, professional sports is a system built on unity and bringing people together. As civic leaders, we should take our cue from them. Teams, coaches, players, spectators, football, basketball, ice hockey, tennis, they are all great unifiers in our country. It is disappointing to see players attacked in their effort to shed light on inequality in our neighborhoods.

□ 1945

We know division and inequality exists in our neighborhoods. We should be shining a light, as the gentleman from New Jersey just did, on how to change this and make it better.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from the great State of Illinois (Ms. KELLY), someone who I have watched a great deal, and she just did a fantastic job over the weekend. I watched her in action.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and I thank him for leading this important hour tonight.

Madam Speaker, I rise today with my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus and with Americans from our great country because it is time to root out racism.

While racism has, tragically, been a part of the American story—from Jamestown to Jim Crow; to the Little Rock Nine, whose 60th anniversary is today—in 2017, we are seeing it rise in new and disturbing ways.

Right now, there is a sham, "Presidential voting commission," plotting to turn back the clock on our voting rights.

Right now, African Americans live in fear that they will be stricken down, unjustly, because of the color of their skin.

Right now there is an un-American and unconstitutional Muslim ban preventing families from reuniting.

Right now the Attorney General is undoing consent decrees and pouring billions of tax dollars into the for-profit prison industry.

Right now there are rabid racists, White nationalists, and White supremacists that this administration won't denounce.

And right now our President refuses to blame White supremacists for racially motivated killings in Charlottesville. The individuals, who inspired this bigoted violence, he called “some very fine people.”

Just this weekend, we saw President Trump attack athletes for exercising their First Amendment rights; using terms like “you people” and “those people” in an effort to further divide us.

Our Commander in Chief is uniting those who hate, while ignoring millions of Americans facing a humanitarian disaster in Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Florida, and Houston.

Madam Speaker, if we want to root out racism, we need to start at the top. Let's start with this White House.

Racism is a cancer. You don't ignore a cancer. You don't let it fester and grow. You cut it out. You purge it. You remove it. That is what we must do with racism: remove it, stop it before it grows further and consumes us.

America's greatest strength has always been our diversity. It is the source of our economic innovation that made us the world's largest economy. It is our ability to stand shoulder to shoulder and face down any threats that have been made to America, from the Contrabands and the Red Tails to Lance Corporal Jose Gutierrez. It is our ability to see ourselves and our families in one another that makes America great. It is our compassion and belief that we all share a higher purpose, as Americans, that propels us to higher heights.

It is our capacity to come together and break bread, help someone with a flat tire, even give our own lives for those of others. These are the things that make America great, not some idealized, grayscale image of a misremembered past.

It is all Americans who make America great, and that greatness comes in all colors, all genders, all faiths, all orientations. When we stand together, we are stronger. When we are divided, we will fail. That is why it is imperative that we call out racism, decry racism, and, most importantly, root out racism.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Illinois, who was very succinct, and added points that she needed to. She was very potent in what she just said.

Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COMER). The gentleman from Pennsylvania has 38 minutes remaining.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN). She and I had the chance to travel together during the summer, and she has been a fantastic friend.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman EVANS for giving me an opportunity to speak and for hosting this Special Order hour.

Mr. Speaker, this weekend, behind a podium adorned by the Seal of the President of the United States, Donald Trump, once again, sank even further in disgrace through remarks that were attacking peaceful American private citizens.

It should not be lost on us that when referencing White supremacy and neo-Nazism, Donald Trump saw fit to speak with calculated language, unlike the phrases he used to describe the Black men and their mothers who used their platform to highlight longstanding injustices. His behavior continues to demonstrate that he is unfit to serve as the leader of this free world, and surely unfit to represent the American rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

We have witnessed 9 months of discriminatory policies and proposals emanating from the Trump White House; bald-faced and bumbling attempts to reverse the progress made not only by President Obama, but progress won decades ago, fights that we thought we had already won, issues that had already been settled, from a woman's right to choose, to environmental protections, to civil rights, to workplace safety, and beyond.

In January, Donald Trump assumed the Presidency and made rescinding the freedoms of people of color, the poor, and the sick his first priority.

We look at the establishment of the fraudulent Voter Suppression Commission; the appointments of Jefferson Beauregard Sessions, Betsy DeVos, Sebastian Gorka, and Stephen Miller, a group of people whose ideology directly stands against the advancement of an equal and more perfect union; his support for discriminatory voter ID laws; reinstatement of the failed war on drugs; attacks on affirmative action at colleges and universities; rollback of consent decrees that keep police accountable; the now extended Muslim ban; the transgender ban in our armed services; the rollback of our civil rights enforcement across Federal agencies; reinstating the use of private prisons; refusing to protect Americans and the Nation from White supremacists; all under the slogan of “Make America Great” under the guise of patriotism.

Make no mistake about it, the world is imperfect, and a long view of history shows evil triumphing more often than we would like.

But here in America, in the space in which I work, I will continue to stand with my colleagues here in the Congressional Black Caucus and in the Chambers of Congress to root out racism, sexism, bigotry, and hatred because it cripples this Nation. I will continue to gather in solidarity with my brothers and sisters of color, the Muslim and the Jewish communities, the LGBTQ community, the immigrant community, and every person that is targeted by those who seek to divide us, as this President is doing.

I will take a knee, I will reclaim my time, I will raise my fist, I will stay

awake, I will stay alert, and I am ready to mobilize.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, as usual, I am speechless as the gentlewoman gives her comments because she definitely lets people know where she stands, and I thank her for her comments.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE), another person who also is what I consider a wordsmith.

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for leading this Special Order.

Mr. Speaker, in 1971, then-President Richard Nixon declared the war on drugs, which he labeled as “public enemy number one in the United States.”

Now, at the time of this declaration, America's prisons and jails held fewer than 200,000 people. Today, that number sits at over 2 million people. In fact, the United States incarcerates 25 percent of the world's prisoners, but we have only 5 percent of the world's population.

In fact, shamefully, my State of Wisconsin has the highest incarceration rate of African-American men on the planet Earth.

Now, John Ehrlichman, then-counsel and Assistant to the President for Domestic Affairs under President Nixon, admitted, Mr. Speaker, that the war on drugs was an effort to vilify African-American leaders and to disrupt the African-American community; admitted that the war on drugs was contrived to diminish the reputation of African Americans. Indeed, they were successful because the burden of this failed war has fallen overwhelmingly on African-American communities.

In 2014, African-American adults accounted for just 14 percent of those who used drugs, but close to one-third of those who are arrested for drug possession. And although African Americans and Whites consume drugs at a similar rate, African Americans are significantly more likely to be arrested.

Now, this disproportionate enforcement of drug laws in a nation in which racial groups use drugs at the same rate points to one fact, Mr. Speaker. It can only be explained that race has played an inappropriate role in law enforcement's priorities and tactics.

It is worth noting that in the face of the 1980's crack cocaine epidemic in Black communities, the public policy response was incarceration. Here in 2017, in the face of our current opioid epidemic in predominantly White communities, public officials on both sides of the aisle have banded together to pass landmark legislation to provide drug treatment assistance to those victims.

In recent years, fortunately, leaders on both sides of the aisle have found common ground on the need to reform our broken criminal justice system. Stakeholders from the ACLU to the Koch Institute recognize the crisis of

overcriminalization in this country and the need for immediate action.

Both the House and the Senate have made strides toward the passage of bipartisan criminal justice reform in the 114th Congress, but, ultimately, a bill never made its way to the President.

Now our U.S. Attorney General of the United States, Jefferson Beauregard Sessions, a most ardent opponent to bipartisan criminal justice reform, sits there and does not inspire hope that those fighting to address this obviously harmful and race-based status quo will do anything.

And although our President has dubbed himself the “Law and Order President,” he has not taken the initiative to end this unfair policy.

Just very briefly before I close, Mr. Speaker, I want to list three things that this bipartisan group found would be helpful:

One, we should eliminate Federal mandatory minimum sentencing requirements. We should ensure true sentencing parity among crack and cocaine offenses, and deprioritize non-violent drug offenders and seek medical treatment.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, as usual, Congresswoman MOORE really gets to the point, and I have watched in the short period of time and knew her on the State level as we dealt in the legislature.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON), someone who is very sharp and quick with his tongue.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman, my friend from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Congressman DWIGHT EVANS, for anchoring this Special Order hour, the subject of which is Root Out Racism, #rootoutracism. It is a sensitive topic, somewhat uncomfortable for people, both Black and White, or shall I say dark-skinned and light-skinned.

□ 2000

It is an uncomfortable subject, and no one wants to be accused of being a racist. It has all kinds of emotional connotations and negative connotations, as it should. Because what racism actually is, is a belief, or a doctrine that inherent differences among the various human races determine cultural or individual achievements, usually involving the idea that one's own race is superior, and has the right to rule others.

So in other words, what racism is, is a concept that one believes that their race is superior to the race of someone else. And how racism manifests itself in America, historically, has been that if you are a racist, you are a White person, and you believe that your race is superior to that of a dark-skinned person, a Black person. That has been how racism has unfolded here in America since the White man came to America.

Of course, when Christopher Columbus, an Anglo-Saxon from Spain, came to America and discovered America,

America was populated, at that time, by what we called the Red man, the Indian, a dark-skinned individual—darker than the Anglo-Saxon. And so this country has a history of mistreating people severely who are of a different color than white.

First, it was the Indians. The feeling was that the European was superior to the Native American. That is the bottom line. Now, also, on that ship coming over in 1607, landing at Jamestown, Virginia, were some indentured servants, some of whom were dark-skinned people. Racism was not necessarily a part of slavery, or indentured servitude, but racism was used to ensure that the multitudes of dark-skinned people who were brought over here from Africa, who outnumbered in the South the number of Europeans, or White people there, racism was used to keep those Black people in their place.

In other words, it was not indentured servitude. It was racism based on the subjugation of one group of people, or one race of people by another race of people because the race of people doing the subjugation impressed upon themselves and their children that those dark-skinned people are beneath us. And so slavery became an institution, as did racism.

Those ideas of racial superiority still exist today, but it is so sensitive for people to talk about the fact that racism still exists, and even more uncomfortable when someone is accused of being a racist.

What is a racist? A racist is a person who believes in racism; the doctrine that the human race is superior, and that one's race is superior to that of another. That is a racist.

The problem is, when we don't understand that we are racists. Now, some even say that folks like Black Lives Matter are racists. But that cannot be further from the truth because Black Lives Matter activists are not saying that Blacks are superior to Whites. They are, in fact, saying that all lives are equal; that Black lives matter. So you can't call a Black person a racist when they are not proclaiming their race to be greater than the White race. No.

Racism tends to rear its ugly head in America when White people use it to preserve their position on top, superior. And that is what Make America Great Again was all about. It really wasn't make America great again. It was make America White again. That is what the message was.

The message was a racist message. It began 4 or 5 years ago when our President started this rumor that President Obama was not an American; he was not one of us; he was from Africa. That is appealing to the subliminal messaging, that subliminal messaging that has been implanted in each one of us since we were born. White folks have been led to believe that they are superior.

Now, I am not accusing all White people of being racists, but I think it is

a question that all White people have to ask themselves, whether or not they harbor feelings of superiority. Because I do know that when we look at the mass media, the images that Black folks get of themselves by looking at the media are that we are inferior. That is what is implanted in us.

That is the legacy of slavery, the legacy of racism and slavery, and it has been implanted in our minds that we are inferior. And we have to fight feelings of inferiority just to feel equal.

White people, on the other hand, have been implanted with the theory that they are superior. And so this is the American society that we live in. When President Trump, 4 or 5 years ago, accused President Obama of not being an American, not being one of us, and being from Africa, it was code to provoke the racist instincts in people who harbor them. And not all White people harbor that. That is not the point that I am making.

But the point is, there was an appeal made to those instincts. That instinct was further aggravated by the insinuation that President Obama was a Muslim; he is not one of us. It is almost dehumanizing. And so that was the code word.

Then, when he descended those steps at the Trump Tower and said that all Mexicans were racists and murderers, that was another appeal to the racist instincts in people—in White people, not Black people, not Hispanics, but in White people.

And so playing the racist game is what got President Trump elected, bottom line. And so now that he is in office, we see all kinds of racist policies coming back to fruition.

My colleagues who have spoken before me have talked about it: criminal justice, drugs in society, the prison industrial complex. They have talked about it. I am not going to point out or go over what they have said, but I will say that racism is alive and well in America. We will never be able to root it out until we all have a conversation with ourselves to ask ourselves, and to probe our own minds and souls to determine whether or not we feel that we are superior, whether or not we place ourselves in line before others just because that is the way it has always been, and we want to make America great again.

It is something that we have to think about. It is something that we have to discuss. I, for one, love my fellow man regardless of color, and I know that even many people who don't know that they are racists love their brothers and sisters, and so they will at least sit down and talk. That is what I have to do as a Black man, is to talk with as many people of different colors as I can to show them my humanity, to let them know that I appreciate their humanity, and that I love them.

Maybe through love, we will be able to overcome the scourge of racism that is historical here in America and that is alive, well, and in living color today.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman because he speaks truth to power. He does not bite his tongue.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks, and to include any extraneous material in the RECORD on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, the next person is a rare blend of poise, grace, and elegance. In the short period of time I have had the pleasure working with her, she has been a gentlewoman, but she has been a very powerful voice.

Those who watched her in the last month, she has fought for Hurricane Harvey funding, but she has also done her job. She has been extremely sophisticated.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from the great State of Texas and city of Houston (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for guiding us and providing us an opportunity to really speak from the heart.

I, likewise, want to acknowledge the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus for his leadership as well, Chairman RICHMOND, and, of course, Congressman EVANS, Congressman VEASEY, and Congresswoman BEATTY, who are conducting this CBC Special Order.

I would also like to ask for them to beg my pardon for I wish to start with a commentary on those who are suffering and to bring attention to our friends in the Virgin Islands and in Puerto Rico.

Before I came on the floor, the cable news was reporting again the kinds of vision—or the kinds of visions and scenes that we had in the early stages of Hurricane Harvey: Come help me; but also a reminder of those in Katrina with the big, large sign: Is somebody going to help me? Now, in Puerto Rico, where I am understanding in many parts of Puerto Rico, no government help has come, probably the same in St. Croix.

The picture I have here is a picture in my congressional district where we were attempting and did rescue about 60 people who were surrounded by water and certainly concerned, as others were, having to flee for their lives and looking for high ground.

I am going to leave this picture up, because I would not want my comments going forward to suggest in any way that we are not concerned about those who are unhoused in Houston, Harris County, Port Arthur, Beaumont, and beyond; of course, in Florida; of course, in the Virgin Islands; and the cry for help in Puerto Rico.

So I want to simply say that we in the government have to do our job. We have got to move faster, and we cannot move by Republican proposals for tax relief. We have to do this Democrats and Republicans. Work with us to craft the kind of language and relief that will provide these people with immediate housing resources. These are people without liability insurance. These are people in apartments where apartment owners are moving slowly to restore their apartments.

□ 2015

They need cash. They need the distribution of the millions of dollars that all of this representation of people raising money. There needs to be a pool for housing. We need to give a cash allotment so that someone can get into a clean apartment or they can begin to get their items out of the stores—I don't want to call names—that you go and get wood and begin to fix your homes.

This becomes a race issue. My colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus are really the ones who are going to be—along with a bipartisan effort, and our leader and our whip in the Democratic Caucus and working with the Speaker and the whip and the majority leader, let's get on with it. They actually need direct funding.

This is a backdrop of the words that I want to be able to speak of as I talk about the tragedy of which brings us to the floor. Here is another example of people under water. This is happening all over in these storm-ravaged places.

Yet we have to come to the floor to speak about an unnecessary distraction. While there is a fast-moving target toward North Korea by the boisterous words that have been coming out of the White House so that we might enter into an accidental war with North Korea, all I will say about that is: I don't know if the White House, the Commander in Chief, has been to the DMZ, but I have. I have looked a North Korean soldier in the eye, and that is what our soldiers do every day on that DMZ standing in the gap. Boisterous attacking and credulous language only will lead us into an accidental war.

I further want to indicate that if there is ever a bill among others that continues to speak to Americans from all backgrounds, minorities in particular, that you are not prepared to address the healthcare of people who are in desperate need who have pre-existing conditions. It is, though well-meaning, the Graham-Cassidy bill, another false attempt to undermine the Affordable Care Act.

Having met with health professionals today, I will tell you: between diabetes, sickle cell anemia, kidney disease, and prostate cancer, they cannot afford the Graham-Cassidy bill.

Get on with it. Support the Affordable Care Act, because it becomes a race issue. The predominant number of individuals impacted by prostate cancer and diabetes are African American.

So I want to ask: What is going on in this atmosphere of the Commander in Chief?

I try to understand it because, from my perspective, this is dangerous ground. It is particularly dangerous in setting the tone on the whole issue of race in America.

Who is the guiding force of setting the tone for race in America?

It is, in fact, the leader of this country. It is disappointing that the words that were said by the White House, this President, does not recognize that African Americans have been in the United States military. It does not recognize that, in fact, we are the most patriotic group. And in being patriotic, we take no backseat to the respect we have for the flag.

I came down to the floor so that I could be standing behind the flag. My back is to the flag.

Am I protesting the flag? Am I burning the flag?

I abhor burning the flag. I abhor the destruction of the flag. But I respect silent protests.

It bothers me that the one who is so boisterous would have top advisers and Cabinet picks that have histories of prejudice. A person who leads the country denied responsibility of racist incidents that followed his election.

He launched a travel ban on targeting Muslims. He attacked the Muslim Gold Star parents. He claimed a judge was biased because he was a Mexican American. The Justice Department sued his company twice for not renting to Black people.

This is not a mirage. This is not a rumor. These are facts. In fact, discrimination against Black people has been a pattern throughout this leader's life. He refused to immediately condemn the White supremacists who advocated for him. He questioned whether President Barack Obama was born in the United States not for 1 year, but year after year after year, to the point that I was embarrassed for the former President of the United States, not him.

He treats racial groups as monoliths. He trashed Native Americans and encouraged the mob anger that resulted in the wrongful imprisonment of five young minority boys in the tragedy of the Central Park rape. They were not guilty. He took out a full-page ad in The New York Times wrongly and asked for their execution, the death penalty to those who are not guilty. He condoned the beating of a Black Lives Matter protester. He called supporters who beat up a homeless Latino man passionate. He stereotyped Jews and shared an anti-Semitic image created by supremacists.

So now we defend him even more. Now we suggest that he is playing to his base, that it is okay, and that there are people who believe in what he is saying. There is a percentage of Americans who believe that we should not kneel during the national anthem. These are nothing but things that represent democracy. Democracy is living

and breathing. It is in your heart, your mind, and your soul. I am an American because of her values. The national anthem was written by a man, and we sing it with pride. But it is not God. The flag is not God. It is a symbol of the democracy, the Constitution, and the freedom of speech that is given.

Let me be very clear: none of those football players and others desecrated the flag. They did not spit on it. They did not burn it. They did not desecrate it.

So I came tonight to suggest that there are still two Americas, because it does not seem that there is any understanding of the heroism of people of color. And I have to talk particularly about African Americans who served in the United States military.

Crispus Attucks was an iconic patriot engaging in a protest in 1770. He was shot by royalist soldiers in the Boston Massacre.

Does the White House know Crispus Attucks? Does he know those who have come through the ages, who fought for the Union in the Civil War?

Yet, in doing so, the treatment of African Americans continued to be dastardly violent into the lynchings of the 1900s. Yet we remain patriotic. All we ask is the doors of opportunity be opened and that our leaders respect us.

So let me say to those who don't understand that the First Amendment does not in any way define "do not stand for" or "do stand for the national anthem and the flag." There is nothing in the law that indicates that these individuals are desecrating the flag.

I join with the statements of Commissioner Roger Goodell. I join with the statement of the Texans by Bob McNair. I join the Seattle statement—the most potent statement—that talks about the facts that these individuals have a right to express themselves.

But I do not join with the President, who would say: Wouldn't you love to see one of these NFL owners, when somebody disrespects our flag, to say, Get that son of a B off the field; out; he is fired; he is fired?

I join with our NFL.

Do you know what you are saying?

You are talking about African-American mothers. You are calling them a son of a B. You are calling those children's mother—single mothers sometimes; mothers who have fought to overcome to get their children where they could be—and these boys—and I'm going to call them that—who have gone out to the community and tried to be of good conscience, you have said that their mother is a son of a B. That is racist.

If you don't understand that that is racist—as a mom, I come to this floor and I say to the mothers of those children: I love your sons. Thank you to the NFL and the owners who stood up. Thank you to those who are not African American, who joined with their fellow brothers on the field and knelt—not in desecration of the national anthem, not in desecration of the blood

that was shed by the soldiers who are on battlefields; some of them supporting and shouting for those NFL in terms of the brotherhood.

We will never dishonor our military. How can we? We are the military. We are everything. We are integrated into the American society. We simply ask for the dignity of respect to not call our mothers a son of a B. If they kneel—I heard a young man who is an NFL player say that he will kneel from now on, and the only reason he is doing it is because someone has the lack of judgment to provoke the situation and call their mothers a name.

I refuse to accept that as a standard of leadership for the highest office in the world. Even if you never understand it, sir, if you think you are playing to your base, if you are not the unifier, then we will continue to stand in the gap, and racism is going to be under our foot.

Do you know where else it is going to be?

It is going to be under our knee because we in the Congressional Black Caucus have always stood for what is right.

There is no basis in the First Amendment that says that you cannot kneel during the national anthem or in front of the flag. Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech or of press. Prohibition against abridging freedom of speech applies to Congress and State and local governments through the Due Process Clause of the 14th Amendment. Speech may be abridged in two distinct ways: directly by regulating content of speech; indirectly by regulating time, manner, and place.

So you cannot abridge by standing up with tweets. You cannot abridge without law and regulation. There is no regulation that says that these young men cannot stand against the dishonoring of their mothers by saying: Fire the son of a B.

You tell me which of those children's mothers are a son of a B. That is racism. You cannot deny it. You cannot run from it.

I kneel in honor of them. I kneel in front of the flag and on this floor. I kneel in honor of the First Amendment. I kneel because the flag is a symbol for freedom. I kneel because I am going to stand against racism. I kneel because I will stand with those young men, I will stand with our soldiers, and I will stand with America.

Mr. Speaker, as a senior member of the House Committees on the Judiciary and Homeland Security Committee; Ranking Member of the Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations, and the Congressional Voting Rights Caucus, I rise today to express my views regarding the President's most recent racially inflammatory statements and actions.

On Election Night the President-Elect pledged to the nation that he would be a president to all Americans.

The President has failed spectacularly to keep that promise and his pledge rings hollow to tens of millions of Americans.

Last Friday, in Huntsville, Alabama, a state that was a capitol of the Confederacy, and the locus of some many seminal events in American history and the Civil Rights Movement, that one of his fondest wishes, saying:

Wouldn't you love to see one of these NFL owners, when somebody disrespects our flag, to say, "Get that son of a bitch off the field right now. Out. He's fired. He's fired!"

You know, some owner is going to do that. He's going to say, "That guy that disrespects our flag, he's fired." And that owner, they don't know it. They don't know it. They'll be the most popular person, for a week. They'll be the most popular person in this country.

The President's remarks are wrong and display a shocking lack of understanding of the U.S. Constitution, the role of non-violent civil disobedience in bringing about social change, and the latest example of him falling short in upholding the honor of office.

These are the subjects I will address in my remarks this evening.

Trump Racial History

1. African Americans in military;
2. Name Trump called NFL players is offensive

3. Non-violent protest is protected speech under the 1st Amendment

Graham-Cassidy Is Worst Obamacare Repeal Attempt Yet

Finally, Mr. Speaker, let me share with our colleagues 5 Ways the Graham-Cassidy healthcare repeal bill puts Medicaid Coverage At Risk and is a disaster for Americans.

The Graham-Cassidy proposal goes beyond the American Health Care Act (AHCA) passed by the House in May and the Better Care Reconciliation Act (BCRA) that failed in the Senate in July.

The Graham-Cassidy proposal revamps and cuts Medicaid, redistributes federal funds across states, and eliminates coverage for millions of poor Americans as described below:

Ends federal funding for current ACA coverage and partially replaces that funding with a block grant that expires after 2026.

The proposal ends both the authority to cover childless adults and funding for the ACA Medicaid expansion that covers 15 million adults.

Under Graham-Cassidy, a new block grant, the "Market-Based Health Care Grant Program," combines federal funds for the ACA Medicaid expansion, premium and cost sharing subsidies in the Marketplace, and states' Basic Health Plans for 2020–2026.

Capped nationally, the block grant would be lower than ACA spending under current law and would end after 2026.

States would need to replace federal dollars or roll back coverage.

Neither the AHCA nor the BCRA included expiration dates for ACA-related federal funds or eliminated the ability for states to cover childless adults through Medicaid.

Massively redistributes federal funding from Medicaid expansion states to non-expansion states through the block grant program penalizing states that broadened coverage.

In 2020, block grant funds would be distributed based on federal spending in states for ACA Medicaid and Marketplace coverage.

By 2026, funding would go to states according to the states' portion of the population with incomes between 50% and 138% of poverty; the new allocation is phased in over the 2021–2025 period.

The Secretary has the authority to make other adjustments to the allocation.

This allocation would result in a large redistribution of ACA funding by 2026, away from states that adopted the Medicaid expansion and redirecting funding to states that did not. No funding is provided beyond 2026.

Prohibits Medicaid coverage for childless adults and allows states to use limited block grant funds to purchase private coverage for traditional Medicaid populations.

States can use funds under the block grant to provide tax credits and/or cost-sharing reductions for individual market coverage, make direct payments to providers, or provide coverage for traditional Medicaid populations through private insurance.

The proposal limits the amount of block grant funds that a state could use for traditional Medicaid populations to 15% of its allotment (or 20 percent under a special waiver).

These limits would shift coverage and funds for many low-income adults from Medicaid to individual market coverage.

Under current law, 60 percent of federal ACA coverage funding is currently for the Medicaid expansion (covering parents and childless adults).

Medicaid coverage is typically more comprehensive, less expensive and has more financial protections compared to private insurance.

The proposal also allows states to roll back individual market protections related to premium pricing, including allowing premium rating based on health status, and benefits currently in the ACA.

Caps and redistributes federal funds to states for the traditional Medicaid program for more than 60 million low-income children, parents, people with disabilities and the elderly.

Similar to the BCRA and AHCA, the proposal establishes a Medicaid per enrollee cap as the default for federal financing based on a complicated formula tied to different inflation rates.

As a result, federal Medicaid financing would grow more slowly than estimates under current law. In addition to overall spending limits, similar to the BCRA, the proposal would give the HHS Secretary discretion to further redistribute capped federal funds across states by making adjustments to states with high or low per enrollee spending.

Eliminates federal funding for states to cover Medicaid family planning at Planned Parenthood clinics for one year.

Additional funding restrictions include limits on states' ability to use provider tax revenue to finance Medicaid as well as the termination of the enhanced match for the Community First Choice attendant care program for seniors and people with disabilities.

Enrollment barriers include the option for states to condition Medicaid eligibility on a work requirement and to conduct more frequent redeterminations.

Much is at stake for low-income Americans and states in the Graham-Cassidy proposal.

That is why I strongly urge our Senate colleagues to reject this latest attempt to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD articles, statements, and tweets regarding this topic.

1ST AMENDMENT FREEDOM OF SPEECH CLAUSE IN A NUTSHELL

"Congress shall make no law" . . . abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press"—United States Constitution, Amend. I (ratified December 1791)

FREEDOM OF SPEECH CLAUSE

A. General principles

1. prohibition against abridging freedom of speech applies to Congress and state and local governments through the due process clause of the 14th Amendment

2. Speech may be abridged in two distinct ways:

a. directly, by regulating content of speech
b. indirectly, by regulating time, manner, and place

3. A law or regulation may be invalid on its face or invalid in its application to specific facts

a. facial invalidity: vagueness or overbreadth

b. examples of invalid as applied: parade and protest permits

4. Prior Restraints" are presumptively invalid (e.g. Pentagon Papers case)

B. Regulation of Speech Content

1. Advocacy of Illegal Conduct can be punished if the speech advocates action and amounts to incitement of immediate and probable lawful conduct

2. Defamation: public officials and public figures cannot sue for defamation unless statements are false and made with "actual malice," which requires proof of knowing or reckless disregard of statement's falsity. (New York Times v. Sullivan)

3. Obscene Speech is not protected by the First Amendment. Examples: National Endowment for the Arts funding, "gangster rap" music and lewd lyrics, etc.). To be considered obscene, speech or material must satisfy multi-part test:

a. an average person, applying contemporary community standards, would find
b. the material, taken as a whole,
c. appeals to prurient interests, and
d. lacks redeeming social, educational, political, or artistic value

4. Symbolic Speech is protected by First Amendment. Examples of symbolic speech:

a. Flag Desecration (Texas v. Johnson, 491 U.S. 397(1989)
b. Draft Card Burning (U.S. v. O'Brien, (1968))

c. Arm Bands in school to protest Vietnam War (Tinker v. Des Moines School District (1968))

d. Campaign Finance Laws (Buckley v. Valeo, (1976))

5. Commercial Speech may be regulated much more easily and extensively than political speech to protect public health and safety. Examples of advertising that can be banned

a. Tobacco products
b. Distilled Spirits and Alcohol products
c. Handguns and assault weapons
d. Illegal Drugs

[From the Huffington Post, Aug. 14, 2017]
HERE ARE 16 TIMES TRUMP EMBRACED RACISM
TRUMP HAS A HISTORY OF BEING HESITANT TO
CONDEMN WHITE SUPREMACISTS

(By Lydia O'Connor, Daniel Marans)

Examples of Trump's racism dating as far back as the 1970s.

1. Some of his top advisers and cabinet picks have histories of prejudice

2. Trump denied responsibility for the racist incidents that followed his election

3. He launched a travel ban targeting Muslims

4. He attacked Muslim Gold Star parents

5. He claimed a judge was biased because "he's a Mexican"

6. The Justice Department sued his company—twice—for not renting to black people

7. In fact, discrimination against black people has been a pattern throughout Trump's career

8. He refused to immediately condemn the white supremacists who advocated for him

9. He questioned whether President Barack Obama was born in the United States

10. He treats racial groups as monoliths

11. He trashed Native Americans, too

12. He encouraged the mob anger that resulted in the wrongful imprisonment of the Central Park Five

13. He condoned the beating of a Black Lives Matter protester

14. He called supporters who beat up a homeless Latino man "passionate"

15. He stereotyped Jews and shared an anti-Semitic image created by white supremacists

16. He treats African-American supporters as tokens to dispel the idea he is racist

MILITARY HISTORY OF AFRICAN AMERICANS

The Military history of African Americans spans from the arrival of the first black slaves during the colonial history of the United States to the present day. In every war fought by or within the United States, African Americans participated, including the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Mexican-American War, the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, the World Wars, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq as well as other minor conflicts.

TEXANS RELEASE STATEMENT

"The NFL specifically, and football in general, has always unified our communities and families. The comments made by the President were divisive and counter-productive to what our country needs right now. I hope the reaction from our players results in positive action for our league, our communities and our country as a whole to make a positive difference in our society. Texans players are caring, intelligent men who do so much good, as was shown in the past month when our city was devastated by Hurricane Harvey. I have never been more proud of our players and our team than during this time. It was a display of what is truly possible when we all work together. We will continue to support our players to work together to promote the values of respect and unity."

OTHER STATEMENTS FROM NFL

COMMISSIONER ROGER GOODELL

The NFL and our players are at our best when we help create a sense of unity in our country and our culture. There is no better example than the amazing response from our clubs and players to the terrible natural disasters we've experienced over the last month. Divisive comments like these demonstrate an unfortunate lack of respect for the NFL, our great game and all of our players, and a failure to understand the overwhelming force for good our clubs and players represent in our communities.

NEW YORK GIANT'S CO-OWNER'S JOHN MARA AND
STEVE TISCH

"Comments like we heard last night from the president are inappropriate, offensive and divisive. We are proud of our players, the vast majority of whom use their NFL platform to make a positive difference in our society."

INDIANAPOLIS COLTS OWNER JIM IRSAV

"I am troubled by the President's recent comments about our league and our players. Sports in America have the unique ability to bring people from all walks of life and from different points of view together to work toward or root for a common goal, and the Indianapolis Colts are proud to be a part of that tradition in our home city and state. The vast majority of players in the NFL—especially those who have worn and continue to wear the Horseshoe—have donated millions of dollars to charities, raised money for

those affected by recent hurricanes, created charitable foundations, visited schools, mentored students, worked in homeless shelters, cleaned up parks, and put in hours of their personal time toward improving their communities and the lives of those around them. That's the spirit in which this nation was founded, and we all need to work tirelessly to bring people together to take on the challenges that face us and give back to the people of our communities. More so than any result on the field, that is a common goal worth rooting for."

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS HEAD COACH PETE CARROLL

"In this incredibly polarizing time, there's no longer a place to sit silently. It's time to take a stand. We stand for love and justice and civility. We stand for our players and their constitutional rights, just as we stand for equality for all people. We stand against divisiveness and hate and dehumanization. We are in the midst of a tremendously challenging time, a time longing for healing. Change needs to happen; we will stand for change. May we all have the courage to take a stand for our beliefs while not diminishing the rights of others, as this is the beating heart of our democracy. As a team, we are united in a mission to bring people together to help create positive change. We can no longer remain silent. I will stand with our players."

TWEETS FROM PRESIDENT TRUMP

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump
Many people booed the players who kneeled yesterday (which was a small percentage of total) These are fans who demand respect for our Flag! 7:31 AM—Sep. 25, 2017.

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump
The issue of kneeling has nothing to do with race. It is about respect for our Country, Flag and National Anthem. NFL must respect this! 7:39 AM—Sep. 25, 2017.

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump
So proud of NASCAR and its supporters and fans. They won't put up with disrespecting our Country or our Flag—they said it loud and clear! 7:25 AM—Sep. 25, 2017.

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump
Sports fans should never condone players that do not stand proud for their National Anthem or their Country. NFL should change policy! 6:25 PM—Sep. 24, 2017.

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump
If NFL fans refuse to go to games until players stop disrespecting our Flag & Country, you will see change take place fast. Fire or suspend! 6:44 AM—Sep. 24, 2017.

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump
If a player wants the privilege of making millions of dollars in the NFL, or other leagues, he or she should not be allowed to disrespect . . . 2:11 PM—Sep. 23, 2017.

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump
. . . our Great American Flag (or Country) and should stand for the National Anthem. If not, YOU'RE FIRED. Find something else to do! 2:18 PM—Sep. 23, 2017.

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump
Roger Goodell of NFL just put out a statement trying to justify the total disrespect certain players show to our country. Tell them to stand! 6:25 PM—Sep. 23, 2017.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President, and to direct their remarks to the Chair.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, back in March, the Congressional Black Caucus met with President Trump to deliver a 130-page policy document which highlighted a host of issues facing the black community in America. From voting rights to

criminal justice reform, and economic justice to education and the workforce, there are many areas of society that still experience elements of institutionalized racism and discrimination against people of color and other vulnerable segments of the population.

The undermining of the Voting Rights Act in the wake of the Shelby County Supreme Court decision paved the way for countless states, including Texas, to adopt discriminatory voting laws that were aimed at disenfranchising entire segments of the population. Participation in our elections and the inalienable right to vote are fundamental pillars of our democracy. Our democracy does not function properly without the successful and unimpeded participation of the voting public. Yet, these discriminatory voting laws have been found to do exactly that, while disproportionately affecting minority populations, the elderly, and the poor.

The criminal justice system is another area that is ripe for reform as we consider the fact that African Americans make up only 13 percent of the U.S. population, yet account for 37 percent of prison inmates. In some instances, harsh mandatory minimum sentences condemn relatively minor criminals to a life behind bars. In other examples, we see non-violent drug offenders facing decades in prison over a crime that is better addressed by health professionals, not the criminal justice system. The use of private prisons in states such as Texas has also created a dangerous profit motive behind keeping individuals incarcerated. These toxic conditions are a recipe for disaster that has propelled the United States as the world leader for its prison population rate.

Mr. Speaker, there is much that we can do as a nation to root out any last remnants of racism in our country and address many of these issues. However, it requires the participation and cooperation of a wide range of stakeholder, regardless of party affiliation or background. Restoring Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act through legislation would help address many of the discriminatory voting laws that we have seen emerge, thereby restoring full access to voting for every American. Eliminating mandatory minimum sentencing and treating non-violent drug offenses as a health issue instead of a criminal matter would help reduce the prison population while giving law-abiding citizens a well-deserved second chance. These are tangible steps that we can take today to lessen the racial disparities that exist in our society. I encourage each of my colleagues to work cooperatively to achieve this end. The American people demand it, and we will be a better nation for it.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. ADERHOLT (at the request of Mr. MCCARTHY) for today on account of official business in the State.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of attending to spouse's health issues.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 28 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the

House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, September 26, 2017, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

2622. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General James B. Laster, United States Marine Corps, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 1370(c)(1); Public Law 96-513, Sec. 112 (as amended by Public Law 104-106, Sec. 502(b)); (110 Stat. 293); to the Committee on Armed Services.

2623. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Department of Defense, transmitting a notice of mobilizations of Selected Reserve units from October 1, 2017 through December 31, 2017, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 12304(b)(4); Public Law 112-81, Sec. 516(a)(1); (125 Stat. 1396); to the Committee on Armed Services.

2624. A letter from the Chair, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting the Annual Report to the Congress on the Presidential \$1 Coin Program, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 5112(p)(3)(B); Public Law 97-258 (as amended by Public Law 109-145, Sec. 104); (119 Stat. 2670); to the Committee on Financial Services.

2625. A letter from the Secretary of Agriculture, Secretary of Health and Human Services, Department of Agriculture, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Report on Notifications of Thefts, Losses, or Releases of Select Agents and Toxins for calendar year 2016, pursuant to 7 U.S.C. 8401(k); Pub. L. 107-188, Sec. 212(k); (116 Stat. 656); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2626. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a report entitled "National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease: 2017 Update", pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 11225(g); Public Law 111-375, Sec. 2(g); (124 Stat. 4102); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2627. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a Declaration of a Public Health Emergency and Waiver and/or Modification of Certain HIPAA, and Medicare, Medicaid, and Children's Health Insurance Program Requirements (Territory of the U.S. Virgin Islands and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico), pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 247d(a); July 1, 1944, ch. 373, title III, Sec. 319(a) (as amended by Public Law 107-188, Sec. 144(a)); (116 Stat. 630) and 42 U.S.C. 1320b-5(d); Aug. 14, 1935, ch. 531, title XI, Sec. 1135(d) (as added by Public Law 107-188, Sec. 143(a)); (116 Stat. 628); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2628. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's Report to Congress on the Ninth Review of the Backlog of Postmarketing Requirements and Postmarketing Commitments, pursuant to 21 U.S.C. 355(k)(5)(B); June 25, 1938, ch. 675, Sec. 505(k)(5)(B) (as added by Public Law 110-85, Sec. 921); (121 Stat. 962); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2629. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12957 of March 15, 1995, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1641(c); Public Law 94-